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**FILED**

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CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

**CR21-02978 TUC-JGZ(LCK)**

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

United States of America,  
Plaintiff,

vs.

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. David Cardenas;  
(Counts 1 and 17)
4. [REDACTED]
5. Martin Cardenas;  
(Counts 1 and 17)
6. Melissa Cardenas;  
(Counts 1, 2 and 17)
7. [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED]
9. [REDACTED]

**INDICTMENT**

Violations:

- 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I)  
8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii)  
8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii)  
8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(B)(i)  
(Conspiracy to Transport and Harbor Illegal  
Aliens for Profit)  
Count 1
- 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii)  
8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(B)(i)  
(Transportation of Illegal Aliens  
for Profit)  
Counts 4, 5, 13, 14, 15, 16
- 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii)  
8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(B)(i)  
(Harboring Illegal Aliens for Profit)  
Counts 6, 7, 10, 11
- 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii)  
8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(B)(i)  
(Attempted Transportation of Illegal  
Aliens for Profit)  
Counts 2, 8, 9, 12
- 18 U.S.C. § 1956(h)  
(Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering)  
Count 17

10. [REDACTED]
11. [REDACTED]
12. [REDACTED]
13. [REDACTED]
14. [REDACTED]
15. [REDACTED]
16. [REDACTED]
17. [REDACTED]
18. [REDACTED]
19. [REDACTED]
20. [REDACTED]

Defendants.

8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II)  
Aiding and Abetting  
Counts 1 through 16

FORFEITURE ALLEGATION

18 U.S.C. §§ 982(a)(6)(A)(ii)(I),  
982(a)(6), 982(a)(1), 981(a)(1)(C), and  
28 U.S.C. § 2461(c)

(UNDER SEAL)

THE GRAND JURY CHARGES:

COUNT 1

Conspiracy to Transport and Harbor Illegal Aliens for Profit

From a date unknown to on or about December 31, 2020, in the District of Arizona,  
and elsewhere, [REDACTED] DAVID CARDENAS,

[REDACTED] MARTIN CARDENAS, MELISSA CARDENAS, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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1 [REDACTED]  
2 [REDACTED]  
3 [REDACTED] did knowingly and intentionally combine, conspire, confederate, and agree  
4 together and with various other persons known and unknown to the Grand Jury, to transport  
5 and move illegal aliens, and to conceal, harbor, and shield from detection said illegal aliens,  
6 all within the United States, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private  
7 financial gain, all in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I),  
8 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), and 1324(a)(1)(B)(i).

9 **COUNT 2**

10 **Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

11 On or about November 18, 2019, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED]  
12 MELISSA CARDENAS, [REDACTED] knowing and in reckless  
13 disregard of the fact that three illegal aliens, namely, Anibal Roblero-Gonzales, Guadalupe  
14 Reynoso-Simon, and Nelson Ramirez-Simon, had come to, entered and resided in the  
15 United States in violation of law, transported and moved said aliens within the United  
16 States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and  
17 did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid,  
18 abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United  
19 States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

20 **COUNT 3**

21 **Harboring of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

22 On or about December 4, 2019, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless  
24 disregard of the fact four aliens, namely Diego Felipe-Felipe, Jagler Niz-Ramirez, Tony  
25 Marroquin-Guzman, and F. F-S, a minor, had come to, entered and resided in the United  
26 States in violation of law, did knowingly conceal, harbor and shielded from detection said



1 illegal aliens in any place, including any building or means of transportation, to avoid said  
2 aliens' detection by immigration authorities, and did so for the purpose of commercial  
3 advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure,  
4 and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii),  
5 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

6 **COUNT 4**

7 **Transportation of Illegal Aliens**

8 On or about December 24, 2019, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of  
10 the fact that three aliens, namely Guadalupe Lopez-Tapia, Jose Flores-Mendez, Rogelio  
11 Garcia-Garcia, had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law,  
12 did transport and move said aliens, two of whom were hidden in the trunk of a vehicle,  
13 within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such  
14 violation of law, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same,  
15 in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii) and  
16 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

17 **COUNT 5**

18 **Harboring of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

19 On or about January 26, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of  
21 the fact five aliens, namely, Andres Mendez-Geronimo, Delmar Lopez-Martinez, Miguel  
22 Morales-Perez, Romeo Lopez-Morales and Romero Lopez-Garcia had come to, entered  
23 and resided in the United States in violation of law, did knowingly conceal, harbor and  
24 shielded from detection said illegal aliens in any place, including any building or means of  
25 transportation, to avoid said aliens' detection by immigration authorities, and did so for the  
26 purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel,

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1 command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code,  
2 Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

3 **COUNT 6**

4 **Harboring of Illegal Aliens**

5 On or about March 18, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED]  
6 [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in  
7 reckless disregard of the fact two aliens, namely Lilia Rocano-Nivicela and D C-R, (a  
8 minor), had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, concealed,  
9 harbored and shielded from detection said illegal aliens, and did aid, abet, counsel,  
10 command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code,  
11 Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

12 **COUNT 7**

13 **Harboring of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

14 On or about April 2, 2020, in the District of Arizona, and elsewhere, [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED]  
16 [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that eight  
17 aliens, namely Alez Perez-Reynoso, Brando Escalante-Pablo, Elio Gabriel-Simon,  
18 Esmeralda Miranda-Virgen, Jose Perez-Luna, Jose Perez-Miranda, Maria Miranda-  
19 Miranda, and Vidal Matias-Carillo, had come to, entered and resided in the United States  
20 in violation of law, did knowingly conceal, harbor and shielded from detection said illegal  
21 aliens in any place, including any building or means of transportation, to avoid said aliens'  
22 detection by immigration authorities, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage  
23 and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause  
24 the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii),  
25 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 8****Attempted Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

On or about May 24, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that unknown number of illegal aliens, one known illegal alien, namely Wendy Mendez-Lopez, come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, attempted to transport and move said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 9****Attempted Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

On or about May 27, 2020 and May 28, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that four illegal aliens, namely, Abenamar Cruz-Perez, Fany Jimenez-Jimenez, Henry Alvarez-Hernandez, Jorge Aguilar-Avila, had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, attempted to transport and move said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 10****Harboring and Attempted Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

On or about June 2, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact three aliens, namely, Abelardo Ramirez-Santiz, Guillermo Laines-Garcia, and Maximo Garcia-Morales had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, did knowingly conceal, harbor and shield from detection said illegal aliens in any place, including any building or means of transportation, to avoid said aliens' detection by immigration authorities, and attempted to transport and move said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 11****Harboring of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

On or about June 14, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact two aliens, namely, Avilio Gonzalez and Maximo Garcia-Morales had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, did knowingly conceal, harbor and shielded from detection said illegal aliens in any place, including any building or means of transportation, to avoid said aliens' detection by immigration authorities, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).



**COUNT 12****Attempted Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

On or about July 17, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that two illegal aliens, namely Elias Tomas-Mendez and Walter Juarez-Lopez, had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, attempted to transport and move said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 13****Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

Beginning on or about July 31, 2020 to August 2, 2020 in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that eight illegal aliens, namely, Angel Perez-Velasquez, Elvia Garcia-Lopez, Enrique Garcia-Lopez, Julio Hernandez-Hernandez, Martin Martinez-Velasquez, Miguel Hernandez-Perez, Nabor Hernandez-Cruz, and Velmar Santizo-Morales, had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, did transport and move said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 14****Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

Beginning on or about August 10, 2020 in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that four illegal aliens, namely, Hildiberto Perez-Lopez, Rolando Cardona-Lopez, Enrique Garcia-Lopez, and Andres Mendez-Geronimo, had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, transported and moved said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 15****Transportation of Illegal Aliens**

On or about August 12, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that five illegal aliens, namely, Enedina Maldonado-Gonzalez, Florentina Gonzalez-Rafael, Francisco Ibarra-Carrillo, Isai Flores-Perez, and Mirella Gonzalez-Garcia, had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, did transport and move said aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii) and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 16****Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit**

On or about October 7, 2020, in the District of Arizona, [REDACTED] and other co-conspirators, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that three illegal aliens, namely, Ismael Ortiz-Aguilar, Lorenzo Villatoro-Matias, and Riquelmer Perez-Ramos, had come to, entered and resided in the United States in violation of law, transported and moved said suspected aliens within the United States by means of transportation or otherwise, in furtherance of such violation of law, and did so for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, and did aid, abet, counsel, command, induce, procure, and cause the same, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(i), and 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(II).

**COUNT 17****Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering**

From an unknown date to approximately August 2, 2021, in the District of Arizona and elsewhere, [REDACTED] DAVID CARDENAS, [REDACTED] MARTIN CARDENAS, MELISSA CARDENAS, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] did knowingly, willfully and intentionally combine, conspire, confederated and agreed with each other, and persons known and unknown to the Grand Jury to commit offenses against the United States in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956, to wit:

(a) to knowingly conduct and attempt to conduct financial transactions affecting interstate commerce and foreign commerce, which transactions involved the proceeds of specified unlawful activity, that is, the transportation and harboring of illegal aliens in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii) and 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii),



1 knowing that the transactions were designed in whole or in part to conceal and disguise the  
 2 nature, location, source, ownership, and control of the proceeds of specified unlawful  
 3 activity, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(a)(1)(B)(i); and

4 (b) to transport, transmit and transfer and attempt to transport, transmit and  
 5 transfer a monetary instrument and funds from a place in the United States to and through  
 6 a place outside the United States with the intent to promote the carrying on of specified  
 7 unlawful activity, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(a)(2)(A); and

8 (c) to transport, transmit, and transfer, and attempt to transport, transmit, and  
 9 transfer a monetary instrument or funds involving the proceeds of specified unlawful  
 10 activity, that is, the transportation and harboring of illegal aliens in violation of Title 8,  
 11 United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii) and 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), from a place in the  
 12 United States to or through a place outside the United States, knowing that the funds  
 13 involved in the transportation, transmission, and transfer represented the proceeds of some  
 14 form of unlawful activity and knowing that such transportation, transmission, and transfer  
 15 was designed in whole or in part to conceal and disguise the nature, location, source,  
 16 ownership, and control of the proceeds of specified unlawful activity, in violation of Title  
 17 18, United States Code, Section 1956(a)(2)(B)(i);

18 Said financial transactions total more than One Million Dollars.

19 All, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(h).

20 **FORFEITURE ALLEGATION**

21 Upon conviction of Counts 1-17 of this indictment, defendants, [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED] DAVID CARDENAS, [REDACTED]

23 MARTIN CARDENAS, MELISSA CARDENAS, [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED]

25 [REDACTED]

26 [REDACTED]

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1 [REDACTED] shall forfeit to the  
2 United States pursuant to:

3 (1) Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(6)(A), all right, title, and interest  
4 in any property, real or personal, that constitutes, or is derived from or is traceable to the  
5 proceeds obtained directly or indirectly from the commission of an offense in violation of  
6 Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324;

7 (2) Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(6), any conveyance, including  
8 any vessel, vehicle, or aircraft, used in the commission of the offense; any property, real or  
9 personal, that constitutes or is derived from or is traceable to the proceeds obtained directly  
10 or indirectly from the commission of the offense, and any property, real or personal, used  
11 to facilitate or intended to be used to facilitate the commission of the offense in violation  
12 of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324;

13 (3) Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(1), all right, title, and interest in  
14 any property, real or personal, involved in an offense of Title 18, United States Code,  
15 Section 1956, or any property traceable to such property, and

16 The property forfeited includes, but is not limited to:

17 A sum of money or money judgement equal to the amount of proceeds obtained as  
18 a result of the offenses, including but not limited to **\$1,089,400.00** in U.S. currency.

19 If any of the property described above, as a result of any act or omission of the  
20 defendants: a) cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence; b) has been transferred  
21 or sold to, or deposited with, a third party; c) has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of  
22 the court; d) has been substantially diminished in value; or e) has been commingled with  
23 other property which cannot be divided without difficulty, it is the intent of the United  
24 States to seek forfeiture of any other property of the defendants up to the value of the above-  
25 described forfeitable property, including but not limited to all property, both real and  
26 personal, owned by the defendants, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section

1 853(p), as incorporated by Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(b)(1) and Title 28,  
2 United States Code, Section 2461(c).

3 All pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(6)(A), Title 18, United  
4 States Code, Section 982(a)(1), Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C) and  
5 Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p),  
6 Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), and Rule 32.2(a), Federal Rules of Criminal  
7 Procedure.

8 A TRUE BILL

9 /s/

10 FOREPERSON OF THE GRAND JURY  
11 Dated: November 17, 2021

12 GLENN B. McCORMICK  
13 Acting United States Attorney  
14 District of Arizona

**REDACTED FOR  
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE**

14 /s/

15 DAVID P. FLANNIGAN  
16 FRED COCIO  
17 CRAIG H. RUSSELL  
18 Assistant U.S. Attorneys

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